

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAGU 04251 262209Z

64

ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2765

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEBMASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECEN NU

SUBJECT: THE MEXICAN PLAN IS APPROVED

REF: MANAGUA 4026

SUMMARY: ONE OPTION OF THE MEXICAN PLAN WAS FORMALLY ADOPTED BY THE GON THIS WEEK AFTER A PRIVATE SECTOR STUDY PANEL GAVE ITS STAMP OF APPROVAL. IN ITS COMMENTS ON THE PLAN, THE PRIVATE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS ONE MAJOR CHANGE IN THE PROPOSED TREATMENT OF THE DOWNTOWN AREA, MAKES SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR GON PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS AND URGES THE CONTINUING PARTICIPATION OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR AT EACH STAGE OF THE PLANNING PROCESS. END SUMMARY.

1. AS NOTED IN REFTTEL, THE MEXICAN SUGGESTS A RECONSTRUCTION EFFORT BASED UPON A LOW-DENSITY CENTER CITY AND PLANNED GROWTH IN THE SOUTHEAST SECTOR OF TOWN. WITHIN THIS OVERALL FRAMEWORK, THE PLAN
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 MANAGU 04251 262209Z

PRESENTS TWO OPTIONS, WHICH DIFFER PRIMARILY IN THEIR

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DOWNTOWN, TO BE ADOPTED OR MODIFIED AS NECESSARY TO SUIT LOCAL NEEDS. THE TWO OPTIONS HAVE BEEN EVALUATED OVER THE PAST THREE WEEKS BY THE GON, TECHNICIANS OF FOREIGN LENDING AGENCIES, INCLUDING AID, AND A GROUP OF PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES. THE CONSENSUS AMONG ALL CONCERNED IS THAT THE MEXICAN PLAN IS A REASONABLE BEGINNING AND THAT OPTION A, WHICH ENVISAGES RELATIVELY LESS CHANGE IN DOWNTOWN STREET PATTERNS AND A LESS EXPENSIVE OVER-ALL APPROACH, IS THE MORE DESIRABLE BASIS FOR ACTION.

2. THE PRIVATE SECTOR STUDY PANEL, COMPOSED OF SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE NICARAGUAN DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE, MADE SEVERAL RECOMMENDATIONS, MOST OF WHICH ARE CONCERNED MORE WITH IMPLEMENTATION THAN WITH THE PLAN ITSELF. THE ONE IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATION ON THE CENTER CITY LAYOUT IS THAT ONE MAJOR STREET/TUNNEL/ TRAFFIC CIRCLE COMPLEX BE DELETED. IF ADOPTED BY THE GON, THIS RECOMMENDATION WOULD INVOLVE A FAIRLY SUBSTANTIAL REDESIGN OF THE PROPOSED CITY STREET PATTERN. ON A MORE GENERAL LEVEL, THE PANEL RECOMMENDS THE REOPENING OF THE CLOSED CITY CENTER AND IMMEDIATE STUDIES FOR ITS RECONSTRUCTION, URGES PROMPT AND HEAVY INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS IN POOR NEIGHBORHOODS TO INCORPORATE THEM INTO THE NEW CITY, AND SUGGESTS THAT THE ACTUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN SHOULD BE BASED UPON PLANNED STAGES OF INVESTMENT. FINALLY, THE PANEL ADVOCATES THE PERMANENT INTEGRATION OF PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES INTO THE PLANNING PROCESS. TO ACHIEVE THIS COOPERATION BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS, THE PANEL HAS OFFERED TO HIRE AT PRIVATE SECTOR EXPENSE A GROUP OF TECHNICIANS WHICH WOULD WORK WITH OFFICIAL PLANNERS ON A CONTINUING BASIS. COMMENT: IN ITSELF, APPROVAL OF THE MEXICAN PLAN WAS SIMPLY A FORMALITY. IN SPITE OF SOME CRITICISM ON SPECIFICS, MOST BUSINESSMEN HAVE FOUND THE PLAN LOGICAL IN ITS BASIC APPROACH AND A REASONABLE STARTING POINT FOR RECONSTRUCTION. IN A SENSE, THE PLAN IS LESS IMPORTANT THAN THE FACT THAT THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IS TAKING

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PAGE 03 MANAGU 04251 262209Z

PART IN THE DECISION MAKING AND THAT THEIR PARTICIPATION APPARENTLY ENJOYS FULL ACCEPTANCE AND EVEN WELCOME FROM GENERAL SOMOZA.
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